**Research Paper: Assignment Description**

This paper will use reading(s) from class as well as secondary sources to propose and support an argument about a text (or texts) and its relation to a particular issue, movement, historical period, or theme related in some way to the course’s content.

Your paper should revolve around a central **thesis statement** (which you will place in your introductory paragraph). This thesis should be a focused argument about the text, not an opinion or a factual statement. Do not simply summarize the text, but use textual evidence to support your argument.

Your thesis should be more complex than saying that an author is commenting on his or her time period – all authors do this. Instead, really pinpoint *what* an author is trying to comment on and *why*, and think about the author’s tone and style. Also, I recommend looking past arguments about an author’s autobiography – authors are doing more than trying to convey their own lives in the pages of their novels and short stories.

**Required Elements**

* **2000 words minimum** (this **does not include** your paper heading or your works cited page)
  + Papers that are under the minimum word count will face a significant grade penalty
* Due electronically by **5 P.M.** on **Friday, November 1**
  + Submit your research paper in .doc, .docx, or .rtf format on ELearning
* **File Name:** Save your files as “Last name”, “Assignment Name,” e.g. Krafft, Response Paper 1, in .doc or .docx format.
* **At least 3** secondary sources
* **MLA Format** 
  + Double-spaced (including heading)
  + 12 point, Times New Roman font
  + 1 inch margins, on all sides
  + Italicize book titles, put the titles of short stories in quotation marks
  + Provide parenthetical citations for all quoted work
  + Provide a works cited page
* **Paper Heading**: In the upper left-hand corner of the first page, provide this heading:

Your name (first and last)

Ms. Krafft

AML 2410, Section 8974

Assignment Date

**Important Deadlines**

* **Tuesday, October 29:** Draft of final paper due (needs to meet word count requirement)
  + Bring 2 hard copies of your paper for in-class peer review activities
  + Email me attachments of your paper drafts
* Edit your paper in between these days
* **Friday, November 1:** Final paper is due electronically via ELearning by 5 PM

**Text Choices**

This paper should build on your research prospectus assignment – if you have changed your text choice since that assignment, please let me know. Again, the text choices for this paper include:

* Washington Irving, “The Wife”
* Sarah Wentworth Apthorp Morton, “Stanzas to a Husband Recently United”
* Edgar Allan Poe, “The Fall of the House of Usher” and “The Haunted Palace”
* Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “The Yellow Wallpaper”, “Why I Wrote ‘The Yellow Wallpaper’”, and “Turned”
* Edith Wharton, *The House of Mirth*
* Edna St. Vincent Millay, “I Think I Should Have Loved You Presently”and “I, Being Born a Woman and Distressed”
* Dorothy Parker, “Big Blonde”
* Claude McKay, “The Harlem Dancer” and “Harlem Shadows”
* Jean Toomer, “Karintha,” “Becky,” and “Blood-Burning Moon”
* Zora Neale Hurston, “Sweat”
* William Faulkner, “Barn Burning”
* Ernest Hemingway, selections from *In Our Time*
* Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman*
* Carson McCullers, “A Domestic Dilemma” and “The Haunted Boy”
* Sylvia Plath, selected poems
* Toni Morrison, *Beloved*
* Don DeLillo, *White Noise*
* Robert Kirkman and Tony Moore, *The Walking Dead, Volume 1: Days Gone Bye*

**Some Things To Remember**

* All of your secondary sources must be scholarly and reputable – this means no Wikipedia, no Sparknotes, etc.
* Be sure to back up your argument by presenting evidence from your text in the forms of quotes, summary, and paraphrase. When you quote from or paraphrase something, include citations of page numbers.
  + Don’t use long quotes to fill space in your paper
  + Always pair textual evidence with analysis – quotes don’t explain themselves
  + Avoid plot summary
  + Secondary sources do not replace your own analysis – I recommend using these sources mainly to provide historical or background information that can help you to support your own argument
* You must have a strong **thesis statement**
  + Always answer the central question of *why* an author would write in his or her particular style, about a particular subject, etc.
* If you don’t meet the minimum word count, you will face a significant grade penalty.
  + The works cited page does not factor into this word count
* Remember that your classmates will be researching the same books and stories, so please be courteous in your use of library materials (try to use things on location or return items promptly to the library)
* Outline or organize your paper before you write it, especially since this paper will be the longest work that you produce over the course of this semester
* I have office hours for a reason: if you are concerned about the paper, talk to me before it’s due.

**About Paper Grades**

See our class syllabus for a reminder of how I will grade your assignments.

In each paper, I will be looking at:

* Content: How strong is your argument, development, and support?
* Organization: How well-structured are your paragraphs? Do your overall ideas flow well?
* Mechanics: How frequently do you make errors in grammar, style, and spelling?

Content and organization are the most important areas to focus on.

**Originality Requirement**

You can expand on themes that you discussed in a response paper or class presentation, but you **may** **not** repeat language from a response paper (no copying and pasting). Also, you **may not** copy and paste language from your proposal (given that your ideas and language should evolve beyond what you produced for that assignment).

Likewise, you cannot re-use material that you have written for other classes.

* Plagiarism is defined as quoting sources (published or unpublished) without proper attribution
  + Always cite page numbers, even when you are summarizing material
* Plagiarism also occurs when you borrow someone else’s *ideas* and pass them off as your own
* Don’t do it - you will fail the assignment if you plagiarize, and potentially fail the class as well

**Lateness Policy**

I will reduce the assignment grade by 10% for each day that it is late. I will deduct an addition 10% for every additional day the assignment is late, including weekends.